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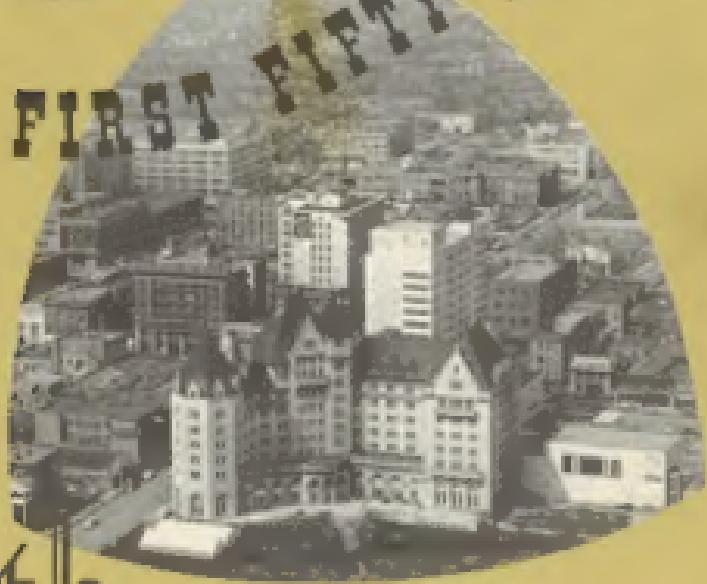


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# EDMONTON



THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS



50

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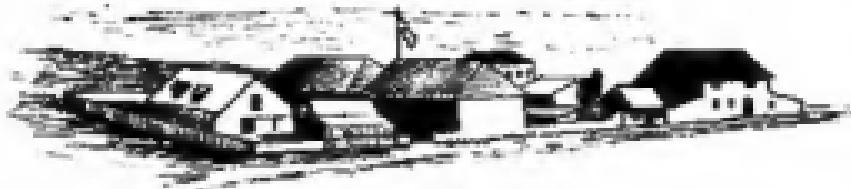
## Prairie Provinces Collection

# Foreword

THIS year we celebrate the Golden Anniversary of our incorporation as a City. Fifty years is not long in the lifetime of many cities in the world, but I am sure few others can tell such a story of achievement and progress as Edmonton. From a frontier town in 1904 . . . serving the awakening agricultural West . . . we have grown into an expanding industrial and distribution centre. The story of our first fifty years was written with the hopes and fears, the heartbreaks and successes of great men and women. They gave us a priceless heritage of courage and faith on which to build our future. This booklet of facts and figures tells, in brief, the story of Edmonton's progress from a tiny settlement to a Twentieth Century city of international importance. Because we all share in our municipal services and because they affect our lives so closely, particular emphasis has been placed on these civic departments. To all the citizens of Edmonton . . . to the pioneers who built our City . . . and to those who will follow in our footsteps, this booklet is dedicated.

*W. Haward*

Mayor.



# The Founding of Edmonton

DURING the last decade of the 18th Century—when France was undergoing the pains of revolution . . . when King George III of England reigned over a pampered court . . . when the newly-established United States of America elected John Adams as its second president to succeed George Washington—the wilderness that was Western Canada was slowly being tamed by strong-hearted men and women pushing back the frontiers of the New World.

Exploring parties were penetrating the lonely, unconquered Land of the Indians, establishing fortress outposts for trade and protection.

In 1794 the Northwest Company of Montreal founded such a post at the mouth of the Sturgeon River, about twenty-five miles east of the present location of the City of Edmonton. It was called Fort Augustus. The following year the Hudson's Bay Company established a rival post close by, naming it Fort Edmonton in tribute to the clerk of the post, John Pruden, a native of Edington, Middlesex, England.

But disaster struck in 1807 when both forts were looted and destroyed by plunder-crazed Blackfoot Indians. A year later new posts were established on the banks of the "Kisiskatchewan Sipie" (Saskatchewan River).

They were abandoned within two years, but in 1819 Fort Edmonton, which was built on a site immediately south-east of where the Alberta Legislative Building stands today, was re-opened. It was strengthened and enlarged into an elaborate fortress—310 feet long and 216 feet wide, surrounded by a palisade 20 feet high, complete with battlemented gateways and bastions surmounted with guns.

And this time it stood . . . a trading centre that was to become a city of International importance in less than a century and a half.



## The Early Years

FORT EDMONTON'S location on the banks of one of the main waterways of the early West made it a logical trading centre and stopping-off point for voyageurs, traders and missionaries. To the tiny stronghold came explorers seeking the long-pursued, elusive "North-West Passage" and the Coppermine River, called the "Metal River" by the Indians who traded at the Fort.

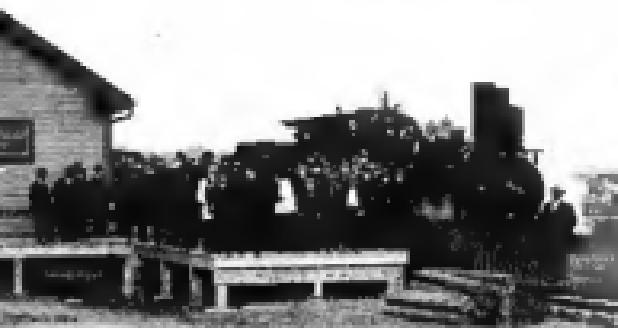
Life was not kind to these early pioneers. The weather was unlike any they had ever seen before—bitter, snow-bound winters . . . blazing, insect-filled summers. Travel was slowed to ox pace because the high-bred horses of the East could not endure the extreme conditions.

But determination and faith were stronger than discouragement and defeat and little by little the seemingly insurmountable barriers were broken down.

In 1869, two years after Confederation, the Hudson's Bay Company transferred its vast territory of Rupert's Land (which included what later became Alberta) to the new Dominion of Canada. Four years later the North-West Mounted Police was formed to represent and maintain the government's authority in the region.

Until 1874 when the first detachment arrived at Fort Edmonton, few changes had taken place at the trading post. The only laws that existed were those of survival and many a wicked crime went unavenged.

But certain events—which must have been of memorable importance in the lonely lives of the inhabitants of the Fort—had taken place in the years between.



1900—First train arriving in Edmonton . . . from Strathcona.

Photo copyright Ernest Brown Collection, Government of the Province of Alberta.

In 1838 the outpost was blessed with the arrival of two priests—the first link with religion the pioneers had had since leaving Red River or York Factory. They were followed by other Men of God in later years, among them Father Lacombe, beloved by Indian and white man alike, who came to the district in 1852.

Records dated 1845—little more than 100 years ago—report 90 persons living at Fort Edmonton. Soon after, makeshift attempts at education were introduced, leading up to the opening of the first regular school west of Manitoba in 1862.

With the coming of the North-West Mounted Police, however, came civilization and progress. A new confidence in the future of the isolated post was evident in the increasing numbers of settlers who arrived, speeding development of the West country.

Just ten years after law and order came to Fort Edmonton, the first tele-

phones in Western Canada were installed here. Three years before, in 1881, the community's first newspaper, "The Bulletin", was established by Frank Oliver.

In 1892 Edmonton was incorporated as a town, with Matthew McCauley as its first mayor. By this time an electric power plant had been built, though electricity was available only during certain hours of the day.

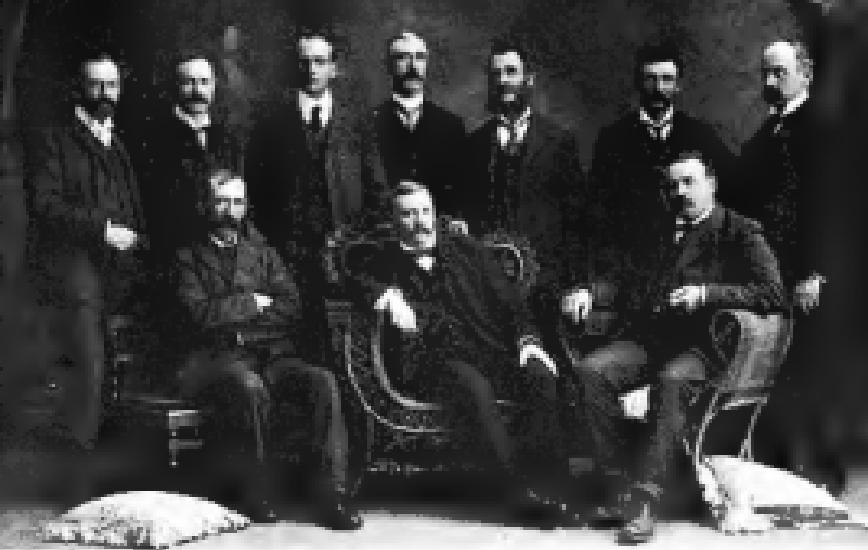
The Klondike gold rush of 1898 helped to swell the population of Edmonton as thousands of gold-hungry prospectors and their families swarmed into the town en route to the north. Many of them stayed instead, and many others returned when their dreams of a quick fortune disappeared with the gold they sought.

After the turn of the century the town expanded at an accelerated pace and by 1904, when the population had increased to nearly 7,000, its recognition as a City could not be denied.

1902—Jasper Ave. from 99th Street, looking West.

Photo copyright Ernest Brown Collection, Government of the Province of Alberta





1904—First Mayor of the City of Edmonton, William Short, centre, shown with members of the City Council.

Photo copyright Ernest Brown Collection, Government of the Province of Alberta.

## *Incorporation as a City*

ON October 8, 1904, Edmonton assumed a new dignity in the eyes of its nearly 7,000 citizens and an important new role in the building of the West. For on that day Edmonton was incorporated as a City by an ordinance of the North-West Territories issued by the Territorial Government at Regina.

No startling changes took place overnight to dramatize the event, but the seed of the future had been planted. There was boundless faith in the new City . . . confidence that was not unfounded as the following years have shown.

The Edmonton Charter was a lengthy, impressive document. It established the City with a Mayor, Appointed Commissioners and a Council—sometimes referred to as the Commissioner System, found only in cities of the West. The Charter stated that "The Mayor shall be the chief executive of the City and it shall be his duty to be vigilant and active in causing the laws governing the City to be duly executed . . . and to recommend such measures as may tend to the betterment of the finances, health, security, cleanliness, comfort, ornament and prosperity of the City."

For municipal election purposes, Edmonton was divided into four districts, or wards, to be extended or otherwise changed as the City grew. The first civic elections were held in December of 1904, when William Short was chosen the first Mayor of the City of Edmonton.

Its Council was made up of eight aldermen, two elected from each ward. The one receiving the most votes was to hold office for two years—the other for one year only. This was the start of the rotation system of electing Council members which is still in effect today. It assures ex-

perienced representatives on the legislative body at all times.

Referring to the City Commissioners, the Charter read,

"There shall be vested in the Commissioners the duties of assessment and collection of taxes and the care, management and control of the police force, the fire brigade and other public services. They shall be three in number, two appointed by a three-quarter majority vote of the entire Council and not to be dismissed except for some cause satisfactory to Council. The third Commissioner to be the Mayor *ex officio*."

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1904—Thrills Skating Rink, scene of Edmonton's Incorporation banquet.



1903—Whyte Ave. in Strathcona, looking West.





1906—Jasper Ave., looking West.



1912—Building of C.P.R. High Level Bridge.



1908—First street car on 101st Street.



1905—Inauguration parade when Alberta was made a Province.



1908—Newly-laid street car tracks on Jasper Ave., looking West.

# The Following Years

Once Edmonton attained the status and maturity of a City, there was no stopping her progress. The year after incorporation—1905—the Province of Alberta was formed and Edmonton was chosen as its legislative capital, though not without considerable opposition from other communities in the province. Calgary in particular was favored by many since it was on the transcontinental line of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Edmonton, however, was considered to be the most logical choice, being the approximate geographical centre of Alberta. Inauguration ceremonies for the new province were held September 1, 1905, at the Edmonton Exhibition Grounds, located at that time below McDougall Hill. Earl Grey, governor general of Canada, and Sir Wilfred Laurier, prime minister, were present for the occasion.

Just two months later the Canadian National Railway's transcontinental line (then called the Canadian Northern Railway) reached Edmonton. This was a dream come true for the pioneers who had contributed to the development of the district. The railroad brought trade with other Canadian centres and it brought immigrants by the thousands, eager to start a new life in the City or on the rich, fertile acres that surrounded it. Thus Edmonton became the centre of a swiftly-developing agricultural area.

A few years later another event of importance took place when the University of Alberta was located at Edmonton. It



1897—Laying of corner stones for Alberta Legislative Building by Earl Grey, Governor General of Canada.

Photo copyright Ernest Brown Collection, Government of the Province of Alberta.

was decided to place the institution close to the provincial capital and a poplar grove across the river from Edmonton was chosen for the campus site. Before suitable accommodation was ready on the new location classes were held at Queen Alexandra School in 1908 and at Strathcona High School the next year.

Dr. N. M. Tory from McGill University was named the first president of the university, with Mr. Justice C. A. Stuart of Calgary as chancellor. Forty-five students enrolled for the first classes, compared with today's approximately 3,500 full-time students and about 1,700 summer school students.

Following Strathcona's incorporation as a city in 1907, a campaign began for its amalgamation with Edmonton. The suggestion was bitterly opposed by many who refused to see the advantages of such a union. However, those in favor were given new impetus in 1911 when the C.P.R. began construction of the High Level Bridge to extend its line across the river from Strathcona to Ed-

monton. Since 1891 the company had served the southern city with a branch of its main line from Calgary. In 1902 the Edmonton Yukon and Pacific Railway was built, linking the two riverside communities via the Low Level Bridge.

But the provincial capital could no longer be ignored by the C.P.R. and indirectly its decision to extend its northern spur to Edmonton was instrumental in the amalgamation of the two cities.

The union took place in 1912 and Edmonton's population of nearly 25,000 was suddenly increased by over 5,500 with the addition of Strathcona. Among the changes made in the civic administration at that time was the addition of two aldermen to the City Council.

At the same time the High Level Bridge was being built, another important piece of construction was underway. This was the Provincial Legislative Building whose stone walls were rising on the north bank of the river, a short distance from the

## YESTERDAY



View from Jasper Avenue and 102nd Street looking East in 1904. Note the wood sidewalks and the hitching post in centre foreground (no parking charges). Small building stands on corner of First and Jasper Ave, where Empire Building now located. Streets were just good plain Alberta soil and debris was still main means of locomotion. Compare this with picture at bottom right.

Photo copyright: Ernest Brown Collection, Government of the Province of Alberta.

remnants of Fort Edmonton. The cornerstone of the building was laid in 1909 by the governor general of Canada, but it wasn't until 1911 that the provincial legislative assembly first sat in the new chambers.

The year 1913 brought a changeover to the numerical system of street identification, but some of the old names such as Jasper Avenue and Whyte Avenue have remained more popular and are still in wider use today than their official street numbers.

The gloom and recession of war descended on Edmonton in 1914, taking its toll in many tragic ways. Industry and agriculture suffered the loss of the men who donned uniforms and marched off to fight for their way of life. Economic values fell and development and progress remained at a standstill.

But with the end of the war in 1918 came the beginning of a new era for the City—one that has played a prominent role in the

story of Edmonton's growth. For the age of aviation had arrived, with all its undreamed-of opportunities.

Men from Edmonton and the district who had ventured into the skies during the war, like the traders and voyageurs who had pioneered the area a century before, realized that the City's geographical position made it a natural focal point for transportation.

The first local flights were completed in 1919 from the same site the Municipal Airport now occupies. These early efforts were followed by "barnstorming" tours around the countryside by brave pioneers of the air whose confidence in the future of aviation could not be shaken by public indifference or ridicule.

Then came the world-famous "bush pilots" in the late 1920's, establishing aviation on a commercial basis for the first time. The infant airline companies they founded were the fore-runners of today's transcontinental lines

which span the continent and, indeed, half the globe.

When the vicious hostilities of war again broke on the world in 1939 the Edmonton Airport took on new significance as a training centre and strategic port of defence. In fact, the City itself, because of its location on the most direct route to the north, played an important role in military activities. One of the world's most amazing engineering feats—the 1,800 mile Alaska Highway which was built in eight months—stretched from Edmonton through the northern wilderness to Alaska.

The City grew at an alarming rate during the years of the war—the more alarming because all but top-priority construction was restricted and the problems of housing and business accommodation became acute.

Close on the heels of peace came the dramatic discovery of oil at Leduc in 1947 and the

pattern of Edmonton's growth changed once more. Thousands of new faces crowded the City streets—speculators, oilfield workers, industrialists and others attracted by the sudden developments. Where to house them and how to provide them with much-needed services when there was already a backlog of work to be tackled, created by the curtailment of materials and the startling growth during the years of the war.

The discovery of oil brought multi-million dollar industries to Edmonton's door and the feeding stations for two giant pipelines to carry oil to hungry markets across the continent.

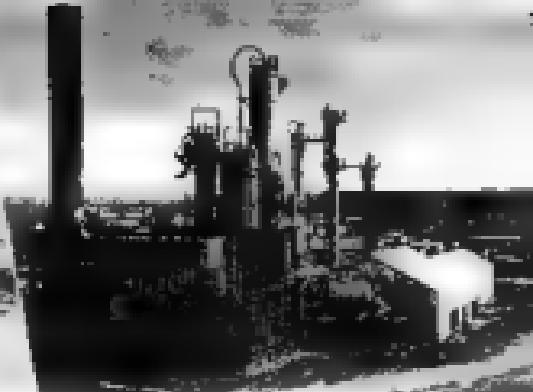
Edmonton has now entered a new era as a manufacturing centre which, coupled with her position as a distributing centre for a vast agricultural area, assures a future even brighter than the past.

Photo copyright: Ernest Brown Collection, Government of the Province of Alberta

The same scene fifty years later when automobiles have replaced the horse and buggy and modern office buildings line the paved streets.

## TODAY





## Edmonton of Today ...

The Edmonton of today is a sprawling, modern-day giant whose industrial muscles are just beginning to flex for the bigger things to come. It's once-sparingly-occupied 44 square miles are now bulging at the seams with huge housing projects and industrial building. In fact, so great has been the demand for industrial plant locations during the past three years, that new areas have had to be serviced with trackage, zoned and opened for that purpose.

The man on the street observing all this activity and transformation, might well say, "How Come?" and "How does it affect me?" The plain and simple fact

is that when the first Edmonton oilwell "blew in" in 1947, the die was cast to convert the City from merely a distributing centre to an area of manufacturing importance also, due to its nearness to essential raw materials. The changes have been dramatic and significant as they have been swift and momentous. The multi-million dollar oil, gas and petro-chemical development in our midst has probably affected most of us in one way or another.

The advent of oil has brought along many basic and secondary industries, all requiring new plants and staffs to operate there. The influx of population as a result of this development created demands for housing and more



## *A modern Transformation*

municipal services. It is true that an enormous strain was placed on the City administration in an effort to both finance and provide the large demand for utilities, lanes, streets, etc. But on the other hand the location of industrial plants brings with it many blessings. A great deal of City land has been sold to these firms; they pay the normal business taxes and other license fees and most important they provide large payrolls representing new wealth to the community. More people and more payrolls help to more evenly distribute the tax load, a benefit to all.

Since 1949 the population of Edmonton has increased at an average rate of eight per cent annually, faster than any other

city in North America. The average rate of growth of Canadian cities is 1.75 per cent. Providing this rate of gain continues, the City will reach 300,000 before 1959. This would mean an increase of fifty per cent in the short period of five years, and a doubling of the population in the nine years between 1950-59.

During 1953, over 50 large industrial developments took place in the Edmonton area—representing an initial investment of over \$27,000,000. This trend of industrial location is continuing in 1954. It is interesting to note that building permits for the first eight months of this year totalled about \$40,000,000, reflecting plant construction and home building.



# More Services for More People

Edmonton is the only city in Canada of comparable size where so many public utilities are municipally owned and operated. This means many advantages to the citizens of the city. Among them

- 1. Services can be provided at little more than cost, only allowing for operating expenses, taxes and sinking funds for expansion and improvement.
- 2. Results of profitable operations are used to provide more and better services and to reduce the burden of taxation.
- 3. Since these utilities are owned by the citizens, there is greater interest in their operation, resulting in better service for everyone.

Because of Edmonton's rapidly increasing population, greater demands are being made on the City's services than ever before. New residential and industrial districts are being developed which must be provided with public services. This

means new roads to build, many miles of water mains and sewer pipes to install, electricity and telephones to provide, schools to build and the many other responsibilities that come under city administration.

Besides these new public works, existing utilities and services in established areas of the City must be maintained and improved.

Long-range planning and foresight is enabling the City to meet these requirements as quickly as circumstances allow and, at the same time to supply **MORE** and **BETTER** service.

On the following pages the various service departments of the City of Edmonton are outlined briefly, from their earliest operations to the present time.

## TELEPHONES

The first telephones in Western Canada were installed in Edmonton in 1884. Twenty-three years later the first automatic telephones on the continent

were put in service here. That was in 1907—three years after the City took over the 500 line system in 1904.

Throughout the following years the department continued to operate at a profit, meanwhile expanding its service with the most modern up-to-date equipment available.

By 1948, because of restricted supplies during the Second World War and the phenomenal expansion of the succeeding years, a growing backlog of applications for telephones was placing a serious demand on the department.

Today the situation is much brighter. Five exchanges now handle 63,000 telephones, more than double the number five years ago, with requests being filled as fast as equipment is received.

A new exchange was opened last spring in Mylswide in south-east Edmonton where some 3,500 telephones have already been installed.

Further expansion of service will take place next spring with the completion of the new Woodcroft exchange in the north-west section of the City.

## CITY STREETS

Top priority items on Edmonton's public works program are paving, graveling, grading, edging and curbing of streets, lanes, sidewalks and boulevards. With the development of new districts comes the need for more streets and sidewalks—adding to the work of maintaining and improving existing thoroughfares.

Paving of city streets began in 1907 although on a very minor scale. This year the City Engineer's Department is spending \$4,800,000 on street and lane improvement—bringing the total mileage to double that of 1930. By the end of this year there will be approximately 200 miles of paved streets and roads—well over 300 miles of gravelled and graded streets and more than 100 miles of edged streets.

And figures show that the record for lane and sidewalk improvements since 1930 is equally impressive. Four years ago the City had 73 miles of gravelled lanes, compared with nearly 130 by the end of last year. The total mileage of paved sidewalks has increased from slightly more than 200 to well over 400 during the same period.



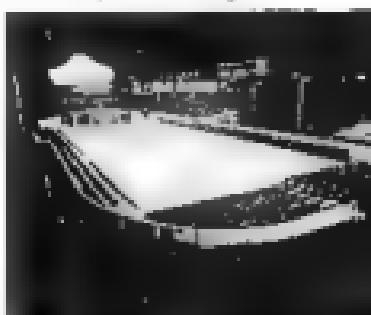
Furnace room at the City Power Plant



Part of Edmonton's large street-paving program



Edmonton's new Mylswide Telephone Exchange



Interior of Edmonton Gardens at Riverdale Grounds

# POWER and WATER



Edmonton Power Plant showing new addition.

## POWER PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

Power to turn the wheels of industry—electricity to light the homes and streets of Edmonton, is produced in the City's \$6,700,000 Power Plant, largest municipally-owned plant of its kind in Canada.

In 1904 the newly-incorporated City went into the power manufacturing and distributing business. The following year it was serving 650 customers. Today the Electric Light and Power Department distributes electricity to about 35,500 residential, commercial and industrial connections in the City. The Edmonton Transit System also depends on the plant for power to operate its trolley coaches.

By the fall of 1955, when a \$2,500,000 extension now under construction is completed, the plant will have doubled its capacity again in the brief span of two years—from 60,000

kilowatts in 1953 to 120,000 kilowatts. And by 1958, with the completion of a further \$6,000,000 expansion program the plant will be capable of producing 180,000 kilowatts of electric energy.

## WATER TREATMENT AND DISTRIBUTION

Edmonton's modern Water Treatment Plant, operated in connection with the City Power Plant, is a far cry from the primitive open air basin that served as a purifying station for the City's water supply in 1904. Then the only treatment given the water was a handful of alum to hasten sedimentation.

Today the purifying process is a precise one, carefully controlled so that the exact amount of lime and soda ash (softening ingredients) and sterilizing and clarifying chemicals is introduced into the water before it is distributed by the Waterworks Distribution System.

Moreover Edmonton is one of the few cities on the continent to soften its water to an average of 75 parts per million.

The present plant, valued at \$2,200,000, is capable of treating 31,000,000 gallons per day. This capacity will be almost doubled when a

\$1,000,000 extension now underway is put in service in 1956.

In North Edmonton a huge 12½ million gallon reservoir is being built to assure adequate water pressure and supplies in the northern districts of the City during peak requirement periods.

Year	No. of Customers	Miles of Water Mains
1934	103	8
1950	31,000	305
1954	40,188	473

#### City Water Purifying and Softening Plant

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New maternity wing at city-owned Royal Alexandra Hospital.

## HEALTH

Prevention of disease, supervision of sanitation, hospital care and other public health measures are conducted by the City through a threefold program—

1. Board of Health
2. Royal Alexandra Hospital.
3. Municipal Hospitalization Scheme

From a staff of three in 1904, the Health Department has grown with the needs of the community until today nearly 60 persons are required to carry out Edmonton's broad health program.

The care of babies and children is perhaps the most important work of the department. In 1952 the Board of Health assumed administration of the North Side Immunization and 'Well Baby' Clinic. Last year a second clinic was built on the South Side.

Since school health services were taken over from the School Board two years ago, the department has qualified for an additional \$34,000 annually in federal and provincial government grants.

It is also the department's responsibility to see that adequate sanitary precautions are observed by City res-

idents and distributors of consumer goods to the people of Edmonton. Regular inspections are made by Board of Health officers who also check garbage disposal facilities and supervise pest control.

\* \* \*

Until 1950 few major improvements had been made at the publicly-owned Royal Alexandra Hospital, since the first wing was built in 1912—the year the City became responsible for its operation.

Recent years, however, have seen the addition of a chronic patients' annex and a modern 125-bed mother and baby wing—the only one in Alberta contained in a separate building.

Moreover early last year a five-year hospital expansion program costing \$3,000,000 got underway. Completed to date are alterations to the emergency ward, a new ambulance entrance, re-location of interns' quarters, a new laundry building and new laboratory facilities.

Further plans on the program call for additional kitchen services, a new maintenance wing and a new service wing to house X-ray and

physiotherapy departments, a hospital, pharmacy administration offices and more operating rooms.

\* \* \*

Edmonton's municipal hospitalization scheme, financed partly by a provincial government grant, covers all taxpayers, their wives and dependents. Non-taxpayers may subscribe to the scheme and receive the same hospitalization benefits for a reasonable annual rate.

## PROTECTION

**FIRE**—Recent lowering of fire insurance rates in the City is the direct result of a quarter of a million dollar expansion program carried out by the Edmonton Fire Department between 1960 and 1963.

Today the City's fire fighting and protection system—first organized in 1892—ranks with the finest in Canada.

The department maintains a downtown fire hall and seven district stations, strategically located throughout the city. Two-way radio systems keep 38 fire-fighting vehicles in touch with a central alarm system which also controls nearly 300 street fire boxes and 88 sprinkler alarm systems.

Edmonton's 316 firemen, as well as Civil Defence personnel, are trained

in the latest fire-fighting and prevention techniques at Western Canada's only Firefighters' Drill School, located in the City.

**POLICE**—Safeguarding the property and persons of the people of Edmonton is the concern of the City Police Department which has grown from a force of less than 10 in 1904 to about 270 today.

Continuous improvement of crime prevention and detection methods, and increasing manpower as the City grows, provides maximum protection throughout the community.

In the uniform department a 32-member squad supervises traffic, "beat" patrols report to police headquarters from more than 30 alarm boxes located in every neighborhood, and new equipment added to the radio department has raised the number of two-way radio cars to 22.

The Youth Guidance Section, organized in 1962, works with the criminal investigation and morality branches as a third arm of the detection department.

Completion of a \$325,000 addition this year to the Main Police Station downtown has provided much-needed additional facilities for the expanding force.

One of Edmonton's modern new fire halls.

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Mill Creek Incinerator—for improved garbage disposal.



## LIBRARY SERVICE

The world of literature and music is opened to the people of Edmonton by the Public Library which offers education and recreation to students, business and professions, persons and New Canadians.

Library services have been provided by the City since 1913 when two branches were opened—the Main Branch on the north side of the river, and a branch in Strathcona. In 1947 the Edmonton Public Library became the first in Canada to start book-mobile service—portable libraries that make weekly neighborhood visits. Last year a third branch was opened—Sprucewood, a north-east Edmonton.

Today well over 36,000 citizens use the services of the three branches and two bookmobiles.

Assistance to school children is an important function of the Public Library. Staff librarians who visit City schools have enrolled 68 per cent of the student population.

Other phases of the Library's operation include a comprehensive reference system and a record-lending department where both classical and popular music is available.

Main downtown branch of Edmonton Public Library.



## SANITATION

Modern times have brought new measures of sewage and garbage disposal, which have revolutionized the old, less sanitary methods like open dumping. A large-scale program is presently underway in the City to provide disposal facilities adequate for present and future needs—of vital importance to the health and well-being of the community.

The program includes an \$850,000 addition to the incinerator completed this year which provides garbage disposal for a city of 250,000 people.

A \$5,000,000 sewage disposal project—scheduled for completion in 1956—has been launched with a half-million dollar sewage treatment plant on the South Side. Thousands of feet of storm sewers are being built in the Calder, McKernan and other districts to prevent spring and summer flooding.

In all nearly \$4,800,000 is being spent by the City this year on sewers and drainage, \$1,200,000 more than last year's budget.

A network of 340 miles of storm and sanitary sewers drains the homes and streets of Edmonton—30 per cent more than four years ago when there were 360 miles—and 90 times the six miles of sewers that served the Edmonton-Strathcona area in 1904.

18

New West grandstand at Clark Stadium.



# PARKS AND BEAUTIFICATION

Recreation for both young and old is an important phase of modern community living. Edmonton's 2,900 acres of parks and playgrounds—more than one-tenth the City's total area—have been developed for this purpose.

Several areas in Edmonton have, of course, been reserved for parkland since the City's earliest days, but it wasn't until 1947 that a separate municipal Parks Department was organized—to assist in planning improvements of new subdivisions as well as older, established districts.

Among the more recent and important works credited to the department are improvements made this year to Clarke Stadium and Renfrew Baseball Park. At the stadium a new grandstand has been built, increasing the seating capacity to over 20,000; playing fields have been landscaped and new lighting equipment has been installed. Construction of a new, 2,000-capacity grandstand at Renfrew Park has enlarged seating capacity there to more than 4,000.

Completely modernized West End Swimming Pool.

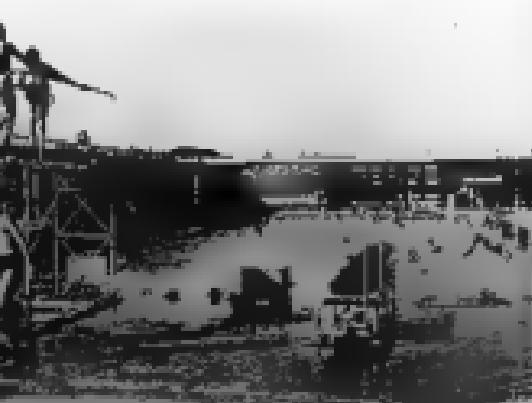
A modernization program has been completed at the West End and South Side swimming pools and a similar project is being carried out at the Borden Park pool. Edmonton's fourth outdoor pool, now under construction in the Mill Creek district, will be opened next summer.

In residential areas, buffer strips of boulevarding have been built to protect City homes from the dust and noise of main traffic arteries. Sixty miles of boulevards were planned for this year—more than four times the total for any previous year. Besides this extension of boulevards and buffer strips, Edmonton's beautification program also includes landscaping of ravines and tree replacement.

Plans for the next several years call for the recreation of the zoo, further development at Whitemud Park, a third municipal golf course in Lauder Park and improvement and development of Borden Park as well as consideration of plans for developing Coronation Park.

Under the direction of the Recreation Committee, the Parks Department will build five new playgrounds and seven wading pools. Eleven new parks and 26 smaller, triangular parks will also be built.

19 Renfrew Baseball Park's new reed grandstand





Interior of control tower at Edmonton's \$14,000,000 Municipal Airport.

## MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

Much of North America's significant and colorful aviation history was made in Edmonton: headquarters for such famed "bush pilots" as Matt Berry, W. R. "Wop" May, Grant McConachie and "Punch" Dickson, whose pioneer flights in the 1920's opened up the far-flung northern reaches into a brand new world of trade and development.

Today, Edmonton's \$14,000,000 airport links the world through four major airlines and a half-dozen charter services.

Since 1927, when the municipally-owned airport became Canada's first fully-licensed field, operations have expanded continuously until now some 200,000 landings and take-offs are recorded annually. An estimated 12,600,000 pounds of air freight passes

through Edmonton each year—1,000,000 pounds destined for Alaska and the Yukon.

The 750-acre field—patterned with three mile-long concrete runways, 16 hangars and some 200 buildings—provides modern accommodation for more than 150 commercial aircraft. The R.C.A.F. and U.S.A.F. also use the Edmonton airport.

## EDMONTON TRANSIT SYSTEM

Since 1908, when Edmonton's first two street cars went into service over 12 miles of newly-laid track, the municipally-owned transit system has gradually extended its service to reach every district in the city. Today, nearly 300 modern coaches travel 3,150,000 miles annually with 36,000,000 passenger fares.

In 1951, Edmonton became the first city of comparable size in Canada to

Airport  
administration  
building



completely convert to an all-bus system. Its name was changed, accordingly, from "Edmonton Street Railway" to "Edmonton Transit System". Equipment now includes 100 motor buses and 80 trolley coaches. This fall six new 48-passenger electric buses are being added to the fleet purchased out of operating surpluses realized by the department during the last two years.

A healthy saving in man hours and operating costs is being shown since the completion, in 1951, of a half million dollar garage and office building on the South Side.

Both adults' and children's fares on the E.T.S. are the lowest of any city in Canada of similar size—providing more mileage for less fare.

## SCHOOLS

Ever since the 1890's, when Edmonton's first one-room schools were opened educationa, development has been an important phase of municipal operation.

Practical, long-term planning by the Public and Separate School Boards is resulting in vast improve-

ments in student accommodation throughout the City. From 1950 to 1953 a \$12,000,000 school building program was carried out to relieve overcrowded conditions arising from Edmonton's sudden and overwhelming growth.

It is estimated that in the next five years the number of school children in the City will increase by 50 per cent from the present total of 34,000 to 51,300.

This year's building program alone exceeds \$3,700,000. Already completed are five new elementary and junior high schools and extensive additions to many older schools. Further construction has started on five more new schools.

Last spring the new Eastgate Composite High School was completed at a cost of \$2,300,000. Now under construction on the South Side is Edmonton's third composite high school which is expected to be completed by September, 1955.

During the next five years the Public School Board plans to spend more than \$16,000,000 on new school construction.

One of the Edmonton Transit System's modern trolley coaches.

Eastgate Composite High School—second of six built completed in the City.



# BRIDGES and Traffic Control

Problems of traffic diversion and control, unheard of fifty years ago, are unique in Edmonton which has the second highest per capita car density of any city in North America.

The problem has increased to the point where a Traffic Engineer's Department was organized in 1952 to handle traffic and to provide adequate parking facilities.

Control of traffic in the City began in 1933 when the first signal lights were installed. By 1950, seventeen such systems were in operation and by the end of this year traffic at 55 intersections will be regulated by automatic systems. Twenty of these will be traffic actuated—controlled by the flow of traffic or adjusted by pedestrians.

In 1948 the City's first 800 parking meters were put in service. Since then

the number has been increased to more than 2,000.

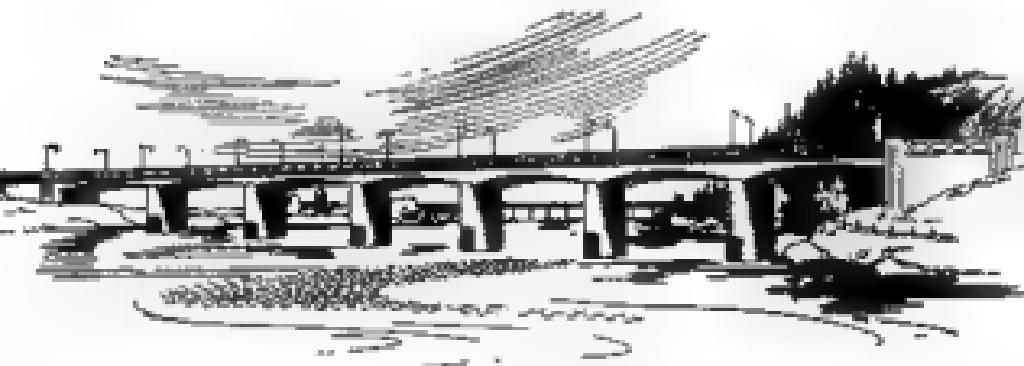
Other measures being instigated to control traffic are one-way streets and elimination of parking on main thoroughfares during certain hours of the day.

The burden of cross-river traffic will be considerably relieved with the completion of the new Great Bridge which will provide a direct route from the South Side to the West End, diverting a good deal of traffic from the City's three other main bridges.

In 1950 the daily cross-river traffic was estimated roughly at 48,000 vehicles. Today an average of 70,000 vehicles cross the City's bridges every twenty-four hours.

Further traffic relief will be provided by the replacement of the wooden bridge at 108th Street and Saskatchewan Drive with a new concrete structure. This is the first phase of a \$2,000,000 project being planned to direct traffic south from the 108th Street bridge.

Architect's drawing of new Great Bridge in the West End.



# Your Civic Administration

## ● PURCHASING

All materials used by any department of the City of Edmonton—from a new generator for the Power Plant to paper clips and pencil sharpeners for office clerks—are bought through the Central Purchasing Department. Since its establishment in 1952, the department has saved the City close to \$2,000,000 on supplies through volume purchasing and by eliminating the work and expense of stockpiling by arranging for delivery on the basis of current needs.

During the twelve months ending August of this year, the department arranged for the purchase of nearly \$7,500,000 worth of materials and equipment.

## ● ENGINEERS

The City Engineer's Department is by far the largest in the municipal organization and, as such, receives a major portion each year of both capital and current appropriations. For instance, of this year's record \$18,000,000 capital expenditure program, nearly \$11,000,000 went to the Engineer's Department.

To reduce expenses and to increase efficiency the maintenance section of the department has been re-organized and decentralized during the last year. The City has been divided into three districts, with men and equipment assigned to each, proving a great

saving in time and money by eliminating long and costly moves from distant parts of the City.

More recently, the administrative section of the department is presently in the process of re-organization. It has been divided into four main divisions, each headed by an assistant engineer. They are:

- 1 Planning and construction
- 2 Business administration
- 3 Traffic engineering
- 4 Street cleaning

The new system has been designed to relieve the City Engineer of much time-consuming detail work by reducing the number of persons directly responsible to him.

## ● PERSONNEL

The right person for the right job is important in any business and since the operation of the City of Edmonton is one of the largest businesses in the community civic officials consider the best possible employee program of particular importance.

More than 5,600 persons are on the City payroll directly or indirectly, at peak employment periods during the year. This figure includes the Public and Separate School Boards and the Edmonton Exhibition Association. About 3,000 of them are the responsibility of the Personnel Department. The remainder comprise the

staff of the Royal Alexandra Hospital which has its own employee organization, the Public and Separate School Boards, and other civic offices.

Previously the City maintained both an Employment Office and a Personnel Department. However during the past few months these two sections have been co-ordinated and the setting up of a joint working program is now nearing completion. It will mean a saving in personnel as well as eliminating duplication of records, etc.

#### ● MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS

Upkeep and improvement of civic property is done by the maintenance division of the Architect and Building Inspector's Department. Since its re-organization in 1962 this division has reduced maintenance expenses of the City to a great extent by doing work of this nature at cost, plus five per cent to cover administration expenses.

Last year work done by the department amounted to nearly \$300,000, four times as much as was done in even the busiest year prior to 1962.

Among the programs completed by the maintenance division during the last two years were the remodelling of the Civic Block, the Utilities building and the main part of the Police Station.

In addition, the West End Swimming Pool was modernized last year by the maintenance crew at a saving of \$12,000 to the Parks Department. A similar program is now underway at the Borden Park Swimming Pool.

#### ● BILLING SYSTEM

Two years ago all computing and recording of light and water utility bills, civic employee payrolls and municipal taxes were transferred to a mechanical accounting system which has resulted in a one-third increase in the amount of work done by the same number of personnel.

Punch card billing of utility accounts under the new system has been particularly effective from the customer's viewpoint. Shortly after the changeover was made charges for telephone service were added to the single utility bill, a saving of \$12,000 a year on postage alone, not to mention the amount of paper and personnel time saved.

Constant distribution of municipal utility bills throughout the City has eliminated congestion and waiting at the Utilities Building by spreading payments evenly during the month.

#### ● CIVIL DEFENCE & SAFETY

Federal Civil Defence authorities have rated Edmonton's local committee as one of the best-organized in Canada. Set up four years ago to provide relief in civil emergencies of all kinds, it has already been called into action on two occasions—during flood threats in 1962 and early this summer.

The Edmonton Civil Defence Committee comprises a fully-trained corps of instructors representing both military and civilian organizations. To date some 2,400 persons have received at least partial training in this field of relief work.

The City has also earned favorable recognition for its industrial safety program for civic employees. Edmonton was the first municipal corporation in Canada to establish a separate safety department. Since its inauguration early in 1948, the City's compensation assessment has been reduced by nearly one-half.

Besides this saving, the program has qualified the City for considerable merit refunds for the last four years. The refund for 1963 alone was nearly \$33,000.

The program is one of safety engineering and education for the prevention of accidents and increased efficiency of operation.

## HOW YOUR CITY IS FINANCED

The City of Edmonton is just like any other business or any individual for that matter in that it must get money from somewhere to pay its bills. There are certain defined sources from which the City - that is, borrows or is granted the money with which to operate and may generally be grouped into five main headings:

- 1 Taxes on Property (home owners)
- 2 Taxes on Business (licenses, property taxes, permits, etc.)
- 3 Departmental Revenues
- 4 Revenue from city-owned utilities
- 5 General Revenue (Alberta Government grants, borrowings, miscellaneous revenue)

It may be said that broadly speaking no one particularly likes paying taxes. But if there were no taxes, there certainly would be no streets or sidewalks or sewers or other services we almost take for granted every day. Yet, despite the payment of taxes so great are the demands for services due to our rapid expansion that the City has no recourse but to borrow money from outside sources such as has been done from the Alberta Government. Without grants and borrowings, the tax rate would indeed be much higher than it is.

The basis of taxation on property is by the mill (1/1000 of a cent on the assessed value of property). Edmonton's present tax levy is now 30 mills.

In 1953 it cost over \$16,000,000 to operate the City at \$27.29 per person. The current and capital expenditures of the City for 1954 will be about \$24,000,000 of which \$18,000,000 will be for operational costs.

It is significant that all the City-owned utilities run their own way and operate at a profit. These utilities such as the telephone, transit system, power and water, etc., contribute to the revenue of the City and assist materially in keeping taxes at a reasonable rate.

It is impossible of course for a rapidly growing city like Edmonton to provide schools and services without either borrowing or resorting to the paying of very high taxes. Present City financial management permits reasonably low tax rates compared to other Canada cities to handle operating costs. But borrowing must be resorted to in order to carry out capital investments - new roads, utility expansion, engineering projects, etc.

The operation of a large city is not only complex but it is big business. Very large sums of money indeed have to be raised every year in order that the City might keep its head above the financial water as it were. Somewhere or other, we all help to pay. Directly or indirectly every citizen contributes to the City treasury, permitting the City to provide the services essential to good living.



**Mayor**  
**Wm. Hawrelak**

## *City Council*

All matters pertaining to the operation of the City of Edmonton are channelled through the City Council which comprises the Mayor and ten aldermen. These are the official representatives of the citizens of Edmonton, chosen by ballot at the annual Civic Elections held each autumn. Prior to 1947, a mayoralty election was held every year but since that time, when a plebiscite was passed by the voters, the Mayor's term of office has been extended to two years. Likewise, each alderman serves a two-year term, with five Council members elected each year. Since 1912, as stipulated in the amalgamation agreement between Edmonton and Strathcona there has at all times been three aldermen from the South Side of the Saskatchewan River serving on the Council.



R. M. Clark, Alderman



E. I. Carter, Alderman



H. Harton, Alderman



J. C. Macdonald, Alderman



Abe W. Miller, Alderman



F. J. Mitchell, Alderman



C. A. Ray, Alderman



Chas. Simmonds, Alderman



H. E. Tanner, Alderman



Mrs. E. Wilson, Alderman

# Civic Boards and Committees



## HOW YOUR CITY IS ADMINISTERED

THE functions of Edmonton's municipal government are twofold—legislation and administration. Legislative duties, such as the making or enacting of civic by-laws, are carried out by the Mayor and City Council, elected representatives of the citizens. Administrative or executive duties are conducted by the City Commissioners, including the Mayor. To assist Council in the smooth and efficient operation of the City, a number of Civic Boards and Committees have been set up to act in an advisory capacity only by making reports and recommendations to Council. Members of these Boards and Committees are appointed for a definite period of time and receive no financial return for their services. The various Boards are listed on the opposite page.

C O M M I S S I O N E R S

D. B. MENZIES

J. M. TWEDDLE

CITY CLERK: G. S. DOCHERTY

STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance

By-laws

\* \* \*

EDMONTON INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD

\* \* \*

GARAGE AND SERVICE STATION BOARD

\* \* \*

GAS APPROVAL BOARD

\* \* \*

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Nominations Committee

Utilities Committee

Welfare Committee

Civil Defence Committee

Civic Centre Committee

Alberta & Northwest Chamber  
of Mines

Architectural Panel

Archives and Landmarks Committee

\* \* \*

ROYAL ALEXANDRA HOSPITAL BOARD

\* \* \*

LIBRARY BOARD

\* \* \*

INTERIM DEVELOPMENT APPEAL BOARD

\* \* \*

BOARD OF EXAMINERS AND APPEALS

\* \* \*

MASTER PAINTERS' EXAMINING BOARD

\* \* \*

BOARD OF HEALTH

\* \* \*

MASTER PLASTERERS' EXAMINING BOARD

\* \* \*

BOXING COMMISSION

\* \* \*

MEMORIAL HALL TRUSTEES

\* \* \*

EDMONTON DISTRICT PLANNING COMMISSION

\* \* \*

RECREATION COMMISSION

\* \* \*

ASSESSMENT APPEAL BOARD

\* \* \*

TAXICAB BOARD

\* \* \*

EDMONTON EXHIBITION ASSOCIATION

TECHNICAL PLANNING BOARD



**EDMONTON — CAPITAL CITY OF ALBERTA**



# THE NEW CITY HALL

It is especially fitting that the 50th year in the City's history will be marked by the dedication of the site for Edmonton's first City Hall. The ceremony will take place October 8 as part of the celebrations marking the Golden Anniversary. This will be a source of great pride and satisfaction to all the citizens of Edmonton who have worked unceasingly towards this goal for many years.

The need for a municipal centre to house all civic offices and Council Chambers has been evident for a long time but because of restrictions imposed by the Second World War and the demand for public works and utilities created by the expansion years that followed, plans for a City Hall had to be shelved.

But they were not forgotten and while the City waited a special fund was set up for when the right time arrived. That time has come and because of the foresight in establishing this fund, it is expected that Edmonton's new City Hall will be completely paid for on its completion, scheduled for March, 1958.

The architect's model of the building is pictured below. To be built immediately south of the Canadian National Railway depot, it has been designed in keeping with contemporary architectural trends so that succeeding generations may readily identify it with the period in which it was built.

Scale model of Edmonton's new \$3,750,000 City Hall.



## NEW HORIZONS

WHAT of the next 50 years? Who is to say . . . but one thing is almost certain—that the next decade will unfold new horizons for Alberta's Capital City. Great as was the discovery of oil around Edmonton, it may well be that the tremendous mineral riches of the north will be developed to a degree that will outstrip oil in importance in time to come. As well as being the hub of a vast, rich agricultural area the city is situated as the natural gateway and distributing centre to the great North Country, where as yet hardly scratched lie some of the world's greatest mineral deposits. New significance is already being attached to the rich deposits of uranium, lead, zinc, gold, salt, silver, asbestos, etc. The voracious appetite of modern chemistry and atomic and petro-chemical activities will doubtless increase Edmonton's importance as the strategic supply and distributing centre for the continent's last frontier. To quote Mayor Hawrelak, "It is not only the economic and geographical factors that make a great city, but more important, the strong moral character of our people. From the beginning they have exemplified the qualities of vision and faith coupled with energy and determination that is woven into the very fabric of the community and the country. From this we draw confidence to serve the present and face the future". The first fifty years in the life of this City has been a thrilling record of progress. The next half century will be no less a challenge to new generations with visions to fulfil as new horizons open up to further achievements and progress.





PUBLISHED BY  
THE CITY OF EDMONTON